The

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## Notes of the Month.

In consequence of the Shakespeare Tercentenary coinciding with Easter Sunday, the actual celebrations will take place for the most part this month. Such is the case in the North of Ireland. The committee appointed for the purpose of marking in a fitting way so important an event, decided to hold their gatherings in the second week of May. The churches will in all probability make their arrangements for May 7th, although in Belfast a few churches selected April 30th as more convenient. On Monday, May 8th, there will be an Opening Ceremony in the City Hall, Belfast, presided over by the Lord Mayor. Sir Samuel Dill will give an address, dealing with the literary significance of Shakespeare. A programme, which should be responsible for a large audience in the Ulster Hall on Tuesday, May 9th, is announced in the newspapers. Recitals from Shakespeare's works will be given by Miss Hilda Davies, a member of Miss Horniman's Theatrical Company, while delightful incidental Shakespearian music will be rendered, vocally and instrumentally, by capable performers. Not the least attractive item of the week's programme will be the lecture by Dr. Starkie in the Assembly Hall on Thursday evening, May 10th, which will deal with "The Wit and Humour of Aristophanes, Shakespeare and Moliere." It is to be hoped that true lovers of Shakespeare's works will do all in their power to make these celebrations the success their interest and importance deserve.

* *

It is surely fitting that we should make much of such events, and make clear to ourselves our debt to a writer like Shakespeare. His works have exercised an influence second only to the Bible upon British readers. It is not alone that we have received such influence through conscious and deliberate study of his writings. That does not represent the whole or even the greater part of his mastery over our minds. He has created the mental atmosphere in which we have been reared. Which of us cannot recall in our earliest days the citation of some of his great speeches or references to his striking characters. Many of us, at an age when we were too young to appreciate what we were doing, were set to learn by heart scenes from the Trial Scene in "The Merchant of

Venice" or passages from the great orations in "Julius Cæsar." The immediate duty was done, and the results appeared, perhaps, negligible. Yet how frequently in later days, in times of mental stimulation, the great, glowing periods of the poet came to our minds, entrancing us by their power and beauty. Then, as never before, we found ourselves under the spell of Portia's delineation of what mercy is and implies; or listened with deeply sensitive ear to Mark Antony's description of Cæsar's character. The school task we once took as a matter of course was seen to be our initiation into a new world of marvel and magic, peopled by personages who were henceforth to walk with us in the pilgrimage of life, alert and companionable. We have laughed with Falstaff, agonised with Lear, paused irresolute with Hamlet, awaited with breathless and painful interest the sad end of Desdemona. What a wonderfully rich and varied world it is that Shakespeare made his own and ours! Here tragedy pursues its fated and fateful course; there comedy plays its mirthful part; or, again, the great personages of history make plain to us the fact that position and power imply the greater responsibility. Nor must we forget the indirect influence of Shakespeare's writings upon us through the later writers and thinkers he inspired. Their name is legion, and many of them have expressed their indebtedness to him in ungrudging terms. For more than three hundred years, abroad as well as at home, his thought has kindled the thought of others; his insight into human life and character has made human nature itself better known and more truly interpreted. We should be strangely wanting in gratitude if these and other reasons did not impel us to count up our debt and discharge it with full-hearted devotion to one of the world's greatest writers—William Shakespeare.

* *

It is somewhat unfortunate that another literary event is likely to be dwarfed by the Shakespearian celebrations, although itself of unusual interest. This is the centennial of the birth of Charlotte Brontë, which fell on April 21st. Connected with this country through her father, Patrick Prunty, as he was known in Ireland, she lived her all-too-short life in the North of England along with her sisters, Emily and Anne, all three women being highly gifted and devoted to literature. For our knowledge of their home and its vicissitudes, of the manner in which three shy, sensitive natures found relief in the creation of works destined to live in literature, we are indebted to Mrs. Gaskell. Her "Life of Charlotte Brontë" still ranks as one of the best biographical works in modern English literature, and doubtless the fact of the above centennial will induce many to realise once again its charming revelation of a most attractive personality.

* *

We are indebted to "The Inquirer" for the following two Notes:—

Wittenberg, with its memories of the Reformation and the tombs of Luther and Melanchthon in the Schlosskirche, has been one of the sacred spots in Germany which has almost rivalled Weimar as a place of international pilgrimage. Suddenly it has been degraded in the eyes of the world, and we shall be forced to associate it with things which are hideous, unclean, and inhuman. The story of its typhus stricken camp, where prisoners of war were left to die in indescribable foulness and misery, is one of the vilest which even this war has produced. We do not care to dwell upon the cowardice of the German doctors and military guards. To such men no infamy is impossible and no punishment could be too severe. If our words are few, anger is hot within us, and a picture has been branded upon our memories which we shall never forget.

* *

But once again the fine English spirit has risen, bright and undaunted, above the most hideous difficulties. Let us place the names of the six English doctors along with that of Nurse Cavell among the heroes and martyrs who make us humbly thank God that the

same blood flows in our veins. Major Fry, Major Priestley, Captain Sutcliffe, Captain Field, Captain Vidal, and Capt. Lauder were sent by the German authorities to the pestilential camp to take the place of the German doctors who had quitted their posts. They did their duty. That simple phrase conveys more than any attempt to describe their work. Three of then died of typhus ; Major Priestley, Captain Vidal, and Captain Lauder have survived and have been allowed to return home. With them must be associated the orderlies among the prisoners who volunteered for hospital work, knowing well the terrible risks which they ran. Like true Englishmen, they were brave and compassionate, and they, too, did their duty. No words are needed to adorn a deed so splendid.

## IN REMEMBRANCE.

By Rev. John Barron.

In some of the shop windows in Belfast lately there appeared copies of a picture of a Boy Scout with Christ standing with His hand on the Scout's shoulder. Such a picture tells its own story ; it preaches with a silent eloquence ; it instantly reminds us of the Scout's pledge : " To honour God and the King, To help others, To obey the Scout Law." That pledge, carried out in its fulness, will make a true Christian, and that is all conveyed in the affectionate way in which Christ places His hand on the boy's shoulder. There is one troop of Boy Scouts in the North of Ireland which will ever remember with reverence and deep affection Scout Master Lieutenant Rae, who gave his young life for his country in the early days of the war, and to have known him was one of the great privileges of one's life, for he was a manly man, a true gentleman, a true disciple of the Master he loved and revered.

Looking at that picture, many a one passing along the streets must have wished that in reality the experience could have been theirs, that in visible form, such as is described in the story of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, Christ would appear in visible form at their side. The Gospel story tells of how the disciples, not knowing who He was, asked Him to go into the house with them, " for it was towards evening and the day was far spent," " abide with us," they said, and how afterwards He made Himself known to them in the breaking of bread, and then vanished from their sight. Supposing He really did appear to us in a form as clear and real as the one we ourselves wear, and He asked us to come and sit down at a table with Him, is there one in the whole of our Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church—good, bad, or indifferent—who would not instantly respond, who would not gladly leave all to follow Him, and, with heart overjoyed, would sit down, and if He broke bread or poured forth wine, to take it from His hand in gratitude ? You would think nothing about your worthiness or unworthiness, about how you were dressed, or anything else ; it would be enough that He had asked you to come. And this would be the feeling you would have with Him—that there is nobody in the whole world but Him and you. You would have the feeling that He understood and knew, and that in itself is the sense of forgiveness.

Theologies and creeds and catechisms are right enough in their own place ; ministers should know something about them, and people who have time and inclination can study them ; in fact, to a certain extent, everybody should some time or other give some attention to them. But they are not urgent, they can all be put on one side, they can wait.

If you were asked by Christ in person to come and sit down at His table, He wouldn't say a word about your belief ; but, uppermost in your mind would be the thought what you could do for Him. If He asked you to take a message to somebody telling him to come also and sit down at the table with Him, you would go like lightning, you would speed like a winged star as His messenger. The smallest service you could render Him you would be proud to do : to bring Him notepaper, pen and ink, if He should ask for them ; or to bring Him

a chair from the other room, or lay the cloth, or bring the bread and wine ; and His look you would never forget. What is He like, I wonder ! Is there a picture anywhere really like Him ? We close our eyes and call a picture of Him up before our mental vision.—Hair like burnished gold, eyes of deepest blue ; infinite compassion, infinite tenderness, infinite strength, in that face of His. But what are words, even if true ! To see this would not in itself be seeing Christ, for our eyes could only see, if we ourselves had trained ourselves in some of the great qualities which were strongly marked in Him—gentleness, steadfastness, devotion.

Every Communion season the feast of love is spread in our meeting-houses. In many of them the old custom of having a long table round which communicants sit down together is still kept up. And every time the communion takes place some think of the day when first they partook of it. In some Churches young people coming forward have to pass a sort of examination before they are allowed to communicate, and sometimes they hold back and older people hold back and avoid the service because they don't think themselves good enough or able to live up to what is expected of them ; some believe in dreadful penalties if they partake unworthily, entirely misunderstanding the sense in which the words were used : " he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation unto himself." Friends, young or old, whoever you may be, in our fellowship of the free spirit, put all these sorts of ideas out of your mind, and you will do well without so much heart-searching, a little of which is good, but too much isn't healthy ; just to think less of yourself and your worthiness and unworthiness, and put your Master in the centre of your life, and not your self.

He brake bread, and gave to His disciples and said do this in remembrance of me ; and He took the cup also and said drink ye all of it. And the bread was passed round from hand to hand, and so was the cup, and soon they will be passed round again, with the words : " In remembrance."

He says " Come." Every communion He says " Come." These are great times in history. The unseen world has become very real. Have you anyone belonging to you who has gone to the front ? Go to the Lord's table and do this " in remembrance." In remembrance of a great deal : of the bond of the spirit which nothing can break, of the unity of the Church visible and invisible, of the life we ought to live whether we live it or not.

Christ sets before us the perfect life, neither you nor I can live it ; but we shall live better for thinking about it, and for trying. It is all that we are asked to do—" to try," and it is not what is done, but the spirit in which it is done that counts, that was what made the widow's mite so valuable.

It is not much you are asked to do. How can you refuse, when He Himself says " Come." The voice may be that of your minister, the message is that of your Lord. Come ! and with everyone who comes, new force and life will be given to the Church.

Yea, Lord, I come !

## ULSTER UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

### Annual Meeting.

THE fortieth Annual Meeting of the above Association was held in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast, on Monday evening, April 3rd.

There was a large and representative attendance of members and friends, including the following :—Revs. A. Gordon, M.A. ; G. L. Phelps, H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D. ; G. V. Crook, J. A. Kelly, G. J. Slipper, M. Watkins, D. J. Williams, F. Woolley, W. G. Marsden, J. Glynne Davies ; Messrs. C. J. M'Kisack, Gawin Orr, M.D. ; W. M'Ninch, E. Gordon, Walter Roberts, Thomas Roberts, Robert M'Crum, Samuel M'Crum, Hugh B. Hunter, Harold Thomas, Hugh Erskine, Joseph R. Erskine, Robert Martin (Finaghy), James Steel, Henry M'Gowan, Linden Agnew, and Samuel Patton.

The Rev. A. Gordon presided, and

devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. G. V. Crook.

The Annual Report, submitted by Rev. J. A. Kelly (Hon, Secretary), expressed regret that the unsettled state of national affairs had prevented any really progressive effort being made during the year. The Committee had felt it incumbent upon them simply to carry on, in a quiet way, the useful work of disseminating the principles of our Faith by means of the distribution of tracts and pamphlets to enquirers. In this respect it was pleasing to report a continued demand for such literature. In addition to the free distribution made to applicants at the Depository, grants of parcels of tracts were made to Congregations in which special services or lectures were held.

Reference was made to the efficient services of the Agent, Mr. E. Gordon, whose warm interest in all the operations of the Association, coupled with ever ready service, relieved the Committee of much of the responsibility which would otherwise devolve upon them in keeping a good stock of the latest publications dealing with our theological position.

In appealing for continued and increased financial support, the Committee made grateful acknowledgment of the valued services of the Collectors and Local Treasurers.

Fitting reference was made to the death of some warm friends of the Association, among whom were Mr. W. Boomer, of Dunmurry, Mr. John Thompson, of Newry, Miss Orr, of Ballylesson, Mr. James Davidson, of Windsor Park, Belfast, and Miss M'Tear, of Knock, Belfast.

Mention was made of a leagcy of £50 by a friend who desired to remain anonymous, and which had been invested in Government stock, the interest to be applied to the funds of the Association.

The Treasurer's Statement of Accounts was submitted by Mr. C. J. M'Kisack (Hon. Treasurer), and showed a credit balance.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the Report and Financial Statement, said the causes which were responsible for the non-progressive character of the Association's work had affected every organisation in the country—religious, philanthropic, and educational organisations were all under the stress of the great European war. If their own work in regard to this special organisation had been necessarily slackened it was not that they had not been working. The general effect applied to them as well as others. The war had done good—he did not say it had only done good—but he thought they might say that this terrible war was doing good in more ways than one. It was bringing nations to understand one another. He was not going to talk about the brotherhood of men, but he would say that they were not only getting to understand France, Belgium, and Russia better, but also Prussia and Turkey. He did not say that understanding always brought respect, but they knew where they were. We were utilising the opportunities of increasing our friendship with many nations. That friendliness had risen a little higher than the mere level of kindliness, and had extended to something like affection. We had also come to understand ourselves better. Turning to their own special work, he said the one great thing they had done had not been in their work against the doctrine of the Trinity, or against the doctrine of the Atonement directly, but it had been in their function as vindicators of the Most High. It was an important function they had filled in Christendom, to stand in the vindication of the Divine character, the Divine clemency, and the Divine justice and brotherhood, viewed on all sides. He was glad they had an Association of that kind keeping alive amongst them the fidelity of the truths, some of which they had received from their forefathers, and others which had been worked out in the generation in which they lived.

Mr. Harold Thomas seconded the motion, and it was carried.

On the motion of the Rev. H. J. Rossington, seconded by the Rev. G. J. Slipper, a vote of thanks was accorded the Rev. G. L. Phelps for the sermons preached by him at the annual services

of the Association on the previous day.

Rev. G. L. Phelps, in returning thanks, said that one of the most alarming features of the religious life of the present day was that people did not bother with or consider the small and apparently unimportant things, which were often really those great things for which their forefathers had shown themselves prepared to sacrifice everything.

Rev. D. J. Williams moved, and Rev. M. Watkins seconded, the following resolution—"That this meeting renews its adhesion to the principles and objects of the Association as set forth in the rules." The resolution was unanimously adopted.

The Rev. D. J. Williams, in moving the resolution, said that he was glad of the opportunity of congratulating the members on the clear and precise statement of the principles and objects of the Association as they are set forth in Rule II. He believed he was right in saying that they were all agreed on the importance of the principles inculcated by the Association.; and that, in fact, they would hardly take the trouble to be there at all, unless they were concerned, more or less deeply with the principles and objects which the Association exists to foster and maintain.

It means that they, at least, are convinced that it does matter, and that to a great extent what they believe in; and not only in what they believe, but also what other people believe. They feel that they have a direct interest in bringing the Christian truths which they reverence to the notice of the public generally. It argues that they are not indifferent to religious truth or to veracity in their expression of it.

He had heard from folk who supposed themselves to be with us, and are regarded by the general public in some sort of way as Unitarians, that they have as much sympathy with Trinitarian doctrine as with the Unitarian variety, with creed infested Churches as with the Non-Subscribing Church. It is an attitude he (the speaker) could not understand. He could not readily enter into the state of mind of a man who can have the face to associate with Unitarians, who prides himself on holding Unitarian opinions, and who is probably a "nothingarian," but has some affinities on other counts both with heterodoxy and orthodoxy.

When he said that he stood aghast at such a man's mental condition, he did not wish to insinuate that he had a right to deny him whatever fellowship he could extract from Unitarian Communion. The narrowness of outlook attributed to the bulk of Christian Churches cannot be postulated of us whether as an Association of individuals or as a Church. Yet it makes the offence none the less heinous that such a man should beard, as it were, Unitarian convictions in their own proper domain, and attempt to deny them expression even on their own hearth stone. This is the weakness of the Non-Subscribing and Unitarian positions. These two have a heavy burden to carry, which is grievous to be borne. They are bound to receive men into fellowship who are only partly or hardly in sympathy with the religious opinions specially termed Unitarian. I am convinced that our latitudinarianism in this respect has a tendency to make Non-Subscription into nothingarianism, and Unitarian opinions into anything and everything anyone wishes to make them.

He brought these woes to their notice, neither because he revelled in the misery of the position thus engendered, nor gloated over the tragedy which had so often been enacted; but to record the conviction that if they had the courage to preach the Unitarian doctrines and all they imply as they are set forth in the rules of the Association, they would inculcate simple and straightforward Christian truths which the world has yet need to understand, and which to apply to modern life would mean its salvation.

On which account he was proud of the principles of this Association, as set forth in Rule II. Each one of the four points there mentioned had a permanent place in the simplest and most intelligible Christian belief. Such a statement of the views prevailing among Unitarians serves a purpose which carries infinite weight in that it pre-

serves us from the danger, odious to every true Unitarian, of being nothingarian and of whittling down essential truths to the level of lightly held and easily discarded opinions.

They should press the principles of their Association a great deal more than was the case. The great difficulty is to do it effectively and usefully. When he recalled the wise words of Dr. Priestley: "We ought always to inculcate just views of things, assuring ourselves that proper feeling and right conduct will be the consequence of them," he felt that the existence of the Association was justified; and that an Association that can so clearly enunciate its principles deserves a large amount of success in propagating them. And further, he felt that whatever want of success had been in the past in propagating Unitarian Christianity had been due to disturbing elements which had landed so many well-intentioned men into the arid regions of nothingarianism. They all knew where good intentions led to, namely, to a very sultry and uncomfortable place; that being so, they should have something more than good intentions in fact, a solid foundation of principles which cannot be shaken, that the things which cannot be moved may remain.

He believed Unitarian religion is capable of being presented, even to hurried and pre-occupied modern life, with acceptance and power. When foundation doctrines are properly presented they are as acceptable and more eagerly listened to than any kind of preaching. Religion is for ever interesting. Theology is still the queen of sciences, and will remain so when modern materialism and the newest cult of the brute shall have subsided. It is for those who assume the functions of teachers to rise to the heights of their responsibilities and declare the truth in them with passion and conviction.

Dr. Martineau records his conviction in one of his essays: "that Unitarianism must discover more variety in its resources, must avail itself of more flexibility of appeal, must wield in turn its critical, its philosophical, its social, its poetical, its devotional powers before it gains its destined ascendency over the mind of Christendom."

He was glad to find this expression of opinion in Dr. Martineau's writings, as he is too often quoted where he seems to be rebuking his fellow-believers. And in the meantime, until Unitarianism gains its destined ascendency over the mind of Christendom—which will not be any too soon—let members of this Association take heart and work with vigour in behalf of that Unitarianism which he verily believed is Christianity in its simplest and most intelligible form.

The ballot papers for election of Committee for ensuing year were distributed, and the following were elected as Committee and Officers for 1916-17: Rev. James Kennedy (Emeritus); Messrs. R. M'Giffin, W. M'Ninch, James M'Williams, W. H. Niall Nelson, Gawin Orr, M.D.; Walter Roberts, Fred H. Rogers, Alex. Spence, Harold Thomas, Revs. H. J. Rossington, M. Watkins, J. A. Kelly, and George J. Slipper, the last two being re-appointed Hon. Secs.; Mr. C. J. M'Kisack was re-appointed Hon. Treasurer.

On the motion of Mr. Hugh Erskine, seconded by Rev. J. A. Kelly, a vote of thanks was accorded the Chairman for presiding, and to all those who had assisted in bringing about the success of the meetings, and the proceedings terminated with the pronouncement of the benediction.

The annual sermons of the Association were preached to large congregations in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, on Sunday morning and evening by the Rev. G. Leonard Phelps, of Holywood, who took for his subjects the following—"Unitarianism and the Church Universal" and "The Unitarian Message to the World at War."

## BANBRIDGE UNITARIAN CHURCH.

### Temperance Meeting.

UNDER the auspices of the above Church, a successful Temperance Meeting was held in the Dunbar Memorial School recently. The Rev. Glynn

Davies presided, and an interesting address was delivered by the Rev. G. L. Phelps, Holywood.

The Chairman said the subject was one which appealed to everyone at the present time, although it was of the utmost importance at all times. Referring to the treating of soldiers arriving from the front, he said that their gratitude could be misplaced in that direction. Soldiers when arriving in London were often made the worse of drink, with the result that they got into the hands of hooligans who led them into the alleys of South-East London, where in some cases they were plundered. The drink traffic had created great disaster not only among the soldiers, but also among munition workers. A little drink created a craving, and in the end led to inability and deterioration of both mind and body; therefore it was evident that a man could not do his best when hindered by such an accursed thing.

The Rev. Mr. Phelps, in the course of an interesting address, said it was difficult at the present time to raise interest in any subject but one—the war. He had been led to the conclusion that in all the long history of our people there had never been a war when Britain had such a good cause, or when she had such a right to say that she was fighting on behalf of righteousness. Germany had made the charge against the British race that they were a decadent and drunken people. That was a grave charge to be levied at us, and he wished to speak on the point: were they as a people drunken. To have such a magnificent cause it would be a pity that it should be sullied by such a bad record. They were not a nation of drunkards, but far too great a percentage of the people indulged in strong drink, and Germany came a a pretty good second. The highest medical authorities agreed that even a small quantity of alcohol taken into the system impaired it in various ways. A wounded man who was a total abstainer stood a far better chance of recovery than one who was not. How did the drink question affect the war? They would remember that the Minister for Munitions said that drink was doing more harm to Britain than all the Zeppelins and submarines put together. If the war, which was costing five million pounds per day, were to end to-morrow there would certainly be very hard times; therefore it was imperative that those who were earning good money should supply legitimate needs, and the surplus could be put into the War Loan. Proceeding, the rev. speaker contrasted the amount spent in drink traffic with that expended in other trades, and asserted that those other pursuits were of more benefit to the cause of industry. Now that so many had paid the utmost sacrifice on the battlefield, did they at home not require all the brain and physical power that they had, instead of wasting it extravagantly, and one of the ways which that power was most wasted was by letting strong drink into their midst. Both the King and Lord Kitchener had decided not to touch strong drink during the war, and those were men who were not moved by any fanatical desires, but simply by the urgent needs of the case. Lord Roseberry had said that if the nation did not throttle the drink traffic, the drink traffic would throttle the nation, and the war had gone to show that he was a true prophet, but there was still time if each one would determine that the drink traffic would not throttle the nation.

During the evening the following contributed to an enjoyable musical programme:—Miss M'Keown, Miss Watt, Miss S. M'Keown, and Miss Shanks. The accompaniments were efficiently played by Mrs. M'Cammon and Miss S. M'Keown.

On the motion of Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. David Ratcliffe, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the Rev. Mr. Phelps for his interesting and instructive lecture.

The Rev. Mr. Phelps having briefly replied, an enjoyable evening was brought to a close by the singing of the National Anthem.

"Length of days is not a good,
Unless their use be understood."

### LIEUTENANT JOHN H. EDGAR, Killed in Action, 24th Feb., 1916.

The day was dark, and chill with Winter's gloom,
Whereon we knew that thou had'st ta'en thy rest,
That thou had'st given all in that stern Quest
Wherein men learn of Destiny and Doom,
Rend'ring their lives for others at the noon
And zenith of their powers. Thy sole behest
Was Duty to the Motherland confest,
And England's answer to her ancient rune.
Not thine the calculated less or more,
Not thine the service of a niggard hand,
When Honour called thee to the stricken field.
Friend of old days, no sadness be our store,
For thou art now of that Immortal band
Who, dying, live, borne on a stainless shield.

W. J. B.

### FAIRY OPERA.

I HAVE always been a dweller in cities, but have always liked a run into the country to places where there is one of our churches, particularly when there is anything of more than usual importance going forward. So when I heard that an operetta was about to be performed by the children of Dromore Sunday School, I took the liberty of inviting myself there for the night in order to be present.

When I arrived at the station I had to inquire the way to my host's residence, and was informed that it was "down the street on the left." This direction was sufficiently vague, but a kindly-disposed person had overheard my inquiry, and with true Irish courtesy pointed out the right house when we reached it. At the same moment I saw my host striding down the drive to meet and welcome me to his abode. We had time for a pleasant cup of tea before proceeding to the school-room where the performance was to take place, and when we arrived the hall was already quite full. However, they managed to squeeze us in, and we had not long to wait before the curtain rose on one of the prettiest little fairy plays it has been my pleasure to see. The stage accommodation was very much restricted, but the organisers had used the space at their disposal to the best advantage. The platform had been extended forward, and drop curtains and footlights fitted. An interesting feature was the scenery, which had been painted by one of the actors, and represented a Dutch canal, its banks lined with quaint red-roofed houses. A distant windmill gave an effective touch of local colour to the country where "Jan of Windmill Land" lived, and did not one of the choruses sing of its big brown sails, and of the canal which lay at its foot? Great pains must have been taken in working up these choruses, especially the one which led up to the dramatic entrance of St. Nicholas (Mr. John Bailie), amidst a shower of confetti, in the second act. Much credit is also due to those who arranged the dances and the pretty little ballet in which the Dutch girls showed their English sisters how to do housework. The solo work, too, was very good, especially the numbers rendered by Frau Martendyk (Miss N. Mulligan), Mynn (Miss M. M'Veigh), and Gertrunn (Miss C. Prentice), all of whom played their parts with a natural grace which was very attractive.

Of the story of the play I need say nothing except that the main theme deals with the loss of a valued bracelet which Jan (Master M. M'Clughan) is accused of having stolen through the mischievous offices of the black fairies. However, the Fairy Queen (Miss C. Miniss) and St. Nicholas soon discover the true offenders, who are finally forgiven on expressing repentance, though Knecht Ruprecht (Mr. A. Clarke) and his black gollywogs are much disappointed at being thus deprived of the pleasure of using their birch rods.

The whole company worked hard, every one seeming quite at home in

their parts, the by-play being particularly good. If I had a word of criticism to offer, it would be that the audience was not sufficiently appreciative, and did not give that enouraging applause which is the breath of the actor's nostrils.

It was not till we were smoking a midnight pipe over the fire on our return that my host confided to me that this is the first time the Dromore School has essayed opera, and though my excursion into the country drove me late for business next morning, the loss of time involved was amply compensated by the enjoyment I had received. NOBODY.

## Memorial Notices.

### MISS GREENFIELD.

ALL Souls' Church, Belfast, has lost a most valued member by the death in her 83rd year of Miss Greenfield, of 36 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast. She died, after a long illness, on 31st March. On the following Sunday the minister made reference to the sad event during the morning service, and, amongst other things, said :—" For a longer time than anyone here present can remember the Greenfield family has been connected with this Church. Their association has been made honourable by loyal and generous membership, and it is with a pang of profound regret that we mourn the death of Miss Greenfield, who, so far as this Church is concerned, is the last of the Greenfields.

Her life was sweet, retiring, and helpful, and, although illness prevented her of late from much active association, yet from her window opposite she used to partake in our services and meetings. Ill for several years, and at times suffering intense pain, she never allowed anyone to know how much she suffered, and always sought to talk of others and their doings rather than of herself. Like all good Christians, nothing so became her in this life as the leaving of it. Those who had the privilege of ministering to her last needs could not help feeling that here indeed was no poor weak woman dying, but an eternal soul being born."

### MRS. M'CORMICK, LARNE.

THIS most estimable lady passed quietly and painlessly away on 12th ult., having attained the ripe old age of 94 last December. She was the last of the family of Myles Atkinson a name and family that will be long remembered in Larne in connection with all benevolent and charitable institutions. Myles Atkinson came to Larne from the neighbourhood of Portadown to occupy a position in Inver Flour Mills. He subsequently established a successful woollen and drapery business, etc., in conjunction with his wife, in Cross Street. Mrs. Atkinson was a Miss Moore, a member of the Raloo family of that name, sister to Rev. Mr. Moore, assistant in school teaching to Rev. George Hay, of Derry, and honourably connected with the erection of Larne National Schools in Back Road and Main Street; and cousin to the late Mr. John Crawford, the donor of our fine organ and gifts of money to the Congregation besides. Myles Atkinson was originally an Episcopalian, but he joined our Congregation, and for many years occupied a prominent position therein as Elder and Secretary. Mr. M'Cormick, husband of our recently deceased friend, was a Presbyterian of the General Assembly; but he also joined our Congregation, and succeeded Mr. Atkinson as Secretary. In early life Mrs. M'Cormick gave ungrudging services in Sunday School and Choir, and indeed in every thing possible in connection with the Church, or anything of a useful or benevolent nature in the town and neighbourhood. Her hand was ready and her purse open. Predeceased by her husband and her only child, she lingered on, still maintaining the friendly, gentle, amiable, and dignified bearing of a Christian gentlewoman, and even when mind and memory had largely gone she was still the affectionate friend, warmly interested in her Congregation and in the welfare of her neighbours and friends.

" Blest Charity thy grace long-suffering, kind,
Which envies not, has no self-vaunting mind."

## BY THE WAY.

WELL, the Chancellor has introduced his new Budget, and almost everybody is breathing freely again—except perhaps those persons who imbibe aerated waters as intemperately as some folk do whiskey. I remember with horror the "wonderful power o' suction" possessed by a certain camp of Boy Scouts in the matter of aerated waters. But that's another story.

* *

Yet this Budget is a magnificent achievement. It actually brings up the increased taxation since the war to about £300,000,000 annually, which means that our national revenue is now about £500,000,000, so that we are paying in taxation, and are *capable* of paying, something like one-fifth of our annual income as a nation. The German Chancellor, however, has only dared to increase his taxation by some £24,000,000, and is depending almost entirely on ever-increasing loans. The difference between Great Britain and Germany is this: that whereas the end of the war will mean for us an immediate reduction of taxation, for Germany it will mean an overwhelming increase.

* *

Some amusing incidents occurred in Parliament in connection with the Budget. On one occasion a member had been talking eloquently about percentages. One of the Ministers replied that percentages were very deceptive. For instance, during the South African war attention was drawn to the fact that the death rate amongst the teetotallers in a famous Scottish regiment was 50 per cent. This seemed staggering, until it was discovered that in the whole regiment there were only two teetotallers.

* *

The introduction of a match tax reminds one that some forty years ago Robert Lowe, then Chancellor, tried without success to introduce a similar tax. Some folk wickedly suggest that his chief aim was to work off a Latin pun—*E luce lucellum* (a tax on light). Perhaps the pun could be better appreciated through an English equivalent. It is as if one were to propose a tax on the sale of tin-tacks for the sake of saying "a tax from tacks"!!!

* *

Some facetious person remarked that the tax on matches could not affect the match industry since matches were made in Heaven. I imagine he has forgotten that another name for matches is lucifers, and that Lucifer was expelled long ago from Heaven to flourish on earth.

* *

Last month I referred to Ian Hay's "The First Hundred Thousand" as an excellent topical book. This month I would call your attention to "The Red Horizon," by our gifted young Irish writer, Pat MacGill. The book is an excellently written narrative of Pat's personal experience in the firing line with the London Irish Rifles. As is to be expected in a book written about more or less Irish soldiers by an Irishman, there are numerous incidents both grave and gay.

* *

Thus does Pat introduce us to his more intimate companions: "We were alone and lonely, nearly every man of us. For myself, I felt isolated from the whole world, alone in front of the little line of sandbags with my rifle in my hand. Who were we? Why were we there? Goliath, the junior clerk, who loved Tennyson; Pryor, the draughtsman, who doted on Omar; Kore, who read Fanny Eden's penny stories, and never disclosed his profession; Mervin, the traveller, educated for the church, but schooled in romance; Stoner, the clerk, who reads my books, and says he never read better; and Bill, newsboy, street arab, and Lord knows what, who reads *The Police News*, plays innumerable tricks with cards, and gambles and never wins. Why were we holding a line of trench, and ready to take a life or give one, as occasion required? Who shall give an answer to the question?

* *

Whilst our lads are fighting, it is the duty of those at home to attempt an answer to this question, and to show by their patriotic self-sacrifice and by

their refusal to let their ideals be stampeded by the rages of war (and especially war against an enemy who shows himself utterly debauched by the lust of militarism) that we are fighting on behalf of the liberty and progress of men and nations—not for revenge, not for a merely sordid commercial success.

* *

The horrors of war are vividly portrayed in this book, but want of space prevents my quoting more than the following incident:—"He was a soldier of the 23rd London, the regiment which had made the charge the night before; he limped a little, a dejected look was in his face, and his whole appearance betokened great weariness. 'How did you get on last night?' I asked him.

'My God! my God!' he muttered, and seemed to be gasping for breath. 'I suppose there are some of us left yet, but they'll be very few.'

'Did you capture the trench?'

'They say we did,' he answered, and it seemed as if he were speaking of an incident in which he had taken no part.' 'But what does it matter? There's few of us left.'"

* *

The humour for the most part comes from Bill, the irrepressible Cockney. Again quotation is difficult. But the following conversation is typical:—"'What are you going to do after the war?' I asked. He rubbed his eyes, which many sleepless nights in a shell-harried trench had made red and watery. 'What will I do?' he repeated. 'I'll get two beds,' he said, 'and have a six month's snooze, and I'll sleep in one bed while the other's being made, matey.'"

* *

It would be hard to find a book giving a better picture of the intense spirit of comradeship and of the grimly lighthearted determination which are so characteristic of our men at the front.

VIATOR.

"Happiness does the longest thrive,
Where joys and griefs have turns alternative."

## Reports.

**Ballee.**—At the recent meeting of the Downpatrick Rural District School Attendance Committee, held on 15th April, the Rev. Joseph Henry Bibby was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

* *

**Banbridge: Literary Guild.**—An interesting lecture, entitled "Belgium," was delivered in the Dunbar Memorial Schools on Wednesday, March 29th, under the auspices of the above Guild. There was a large attendance, including representatives from most of the Churches in the town. The lecture was illustrated by lantern slides, by which the audience was able to obtain a good impression of the mediæval beauties of Belgium as they existed before the war. Many of the beautiful buildings were shown and the marvellous architecture fully explained, which now, since the invasion of the German Army, it will be impossible to replace. The route described was from the North of England, via Hull, to Zeebrugge. Mr. Rossington introduced the audience to Flemish life and cities, the latter including Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp, Malines, Louvain, Courtrai, and Ypres. The second part of the lecture dealt with the beautiful country traversed by the River Meuse, and known as the Belgian Ardennes. A most instructive lecture was brought to a close with a number of pictures showing the difference made by the war as displayed in the scenes of destruction, military preparations, and activity. On the motion of Mr. James Simms, seconded by Mr. S. Bell, a very hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Rossington for his kindness in coming to help us, and for his able and enjoyable lecture. Mr. Stanley Bell proved an efficient lanternist, and the Rev. J. G. Davis occupied the chair.

* *

**Downpatrick.**—Recently, at a very largely attended social gathering in the Assembly Hall, the members of Downpatrick Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church presented Rev. M. S. Dunbar,

M.A., with a complimentary address and a cheque for a goodly sum as a tribute at once of affection and gratitude on the close of his twenty two years' ministry amongst them, and of regret at the departure of Mrs. Dunbar and himself for Comber, accelerated by the settlement of their gifted son, Rev. Kenneth Dunbar, M.A., as assistant and successor to Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A., in the Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church there. At the same time, on the part of the Sunday School, Mrs. Dunbar received a handsome gold brooch.

In the Assembly Hall tea was served between seven and eight o'clock, the ladies presiding at the several tables being :—Mrs. John Cochrane, Mrs. Hugh Cochrane, Mrs. Hugh Dickson, Mrs. J. Dickson, Mrs. W. Dickson, Miss Jellie, Miss Cochrane, and Miss M. Cochrane. Mr. S. C. N. Lowry, Congregational Treasurer, took the chair, being accompanied on the platform by Rev. and Mrs. M. S. Dunbar and Rev. Kenneth Dunbar, Rev. J. J. Magill, Rev. J. D. Davies, Rev. J. H. Bibby, Rev. Ralph Phillipson, the Ven. Archdeacon Pooler, D.D. ; Rev. R. M'Elney, M.A. ; Mr. H. C. Weir, LL.B. ; Mr. J. Dunlop, V.S. ; Miss Jordan, Presentation Secretary, and Mr. H. Dickson, Congregational Secretary.

The Chairman, in a few appropriate words, explained the purpose of the meeting, that was : to do honour to Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar. Like some other people, Mr. Dunbar, who had retired, felt the oncoming of age, but it was hoped that Mrs. Dunbar and himself had many years of usefulness and happiness before them. There was no occasion to dwell on how helpful his ministry had been to the members of the Congregation, how he had fortified their virtues and strengthened them in their trials. A convincing testimony to his faithfulness was to be found in the genuine trust and affection entertained for him. He was an ideal pastor, and an able preacher. Some measure of the respect in which he was held by the whole community was shown in the attendance that night of so many members of other denominations. With them he had cultivated the friendliest relations. During his ministry they had witnessed annual amalgamated Sunday school excursions of all the Protestant Churches in the town, and they looked forward to a continuance of such reunions. In his general work, and especially in the Sunday School, Mr. Dunbar owed much to the unfailing energy and assistance of his wife. Both carried with them to Comber the good wishes not only of the Congregation, but of the people of Downpatrick.

Mr. H. Dickson read the address, to which Mr. Dunbar replied. Mrs. Dunbar, in a gracious little speech, presented prizes to the Sunday School children, and then the meeting was addressed by the Archdeacon of Down, Rev. R. M'Elney, Presbyterian minister, Mr. H. C. Weir, Rev. J. H. Bibby, Rev. J. J. Magill, and Rev. J. D. Davies. Subsequently a delightful musical programme was rendered, after which, on the motion of Rev. R. Phillipson, seconded by Mr. J. Dunlop, votes of thanks were passed, and the proceedings concluded with the National Anthem.

* *

**Killinchy.**—The first minister of the Remonstrant Congregation, the Rev. Samuel Watson, M.A., died on the 16th March, 1856. Now that 60 years are passed, it was decided to hold Anniversary Services on Sunday, March 26th. The day turned out to be a severe one, snow showers and intense cold making themselves disagreeably manifest. In spite of the adverse conditions, a fairly good congregation assembled in the morning, when the Rev. D. J. Williams conducted the service, and preached on " the Open Door " in religious fellowship. The Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Church, the Rev. J. A. Kelly, very kindly came to conduct the Evening Service, and to preach on the principles of Non Subscription, the keynote of which being " if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." Mr. Kelly's sermon was very much appreciated. The lucid and frank manner in which he dealt with the subject, and the good feeling manifested

when touching on old controversies rendered it a delightful task to listen to him. The Choir had prepared special hymns and anthems for the occasion, and rendered them in a spirited manner, thus entering into the proper spirit for the occasion.

* *

## MILL HILL CHAPEL, LEEDS.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know that a pamphlet, containing a report of the proceedings at the unveiling of the Memorial Window to the late Lord Airedale, together with a description of the window and a coloured reproduction of it, will be ready shortly. If any of your readers would care to have a copy, I shall be glad to forward same, so long as the supply lasts, on receipt of a (half-penny) stamped, addressed envelope, measuring $8\frac{1}{4}$ in. by $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. I may add that if there be a sufficient demand it is proposed to publish enlargements (approximately 4to. size) of the reproduction, the cost of which will be 1s. 6d. or 2s. each, according to the larger or smaller number ordered. If any of your readers would like these, will they please send me a postcard, stating number required?—Yours, etc.,

FREDK. G. JACKSON,
Hon. Acting Editor "Mill Hill Chapel Record."
8 Park Lane, Leeds,
14/4/16.

* *

**Mountpottinger.**—The Choir held their annual Concert and Dramatic Entertainment in the School-room, on Friday, March 24th, when a good audience gathered. The programme was a varied one, and comprised songs, recitations, and dramatic sketches. Miss Molyneaux and Rev. M. Watkins were heard to advantage, both as soloists and in a duet. Miss Florrie Newman showed elocutionary powers, and with her sisters and Miss Jackson rendered a costume song, entitled "Red Cross Nurses." The sketches were entitled "Whitewashers," "Is he Married?" and "Rival Relations"; the male characters being successfully portrayed by Messrs. L. Watters, T. M'Clure, W. Wilson, and H. Steel; while the gentler sex were represented by Misses M. Neill, E. Neill, K. Mitchell, H. Smyth, A. Neill, H. Montgomery, E. Malcolm, F. Newman, D. Newman, and R. Newman. The accompanist was the organist (Miss M. Morrow, L.I.S.M.), to whose powers as an organiser the success of the evening was largely responsible. Thanks are due to those ladies who had charge of the tea, dispensed after the entertainment, and also to Mr. J. Malcolm, who erected the footlights and acted as stage manager, and to Miss N. Allen as ticket collector.

With the laudable object in view of considerably reducing the Church debt, Special Services were held on Sunday, April 9th, the preacher being Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., Stephen's Green, Dublin. Good congregations assembled, especially in the evening, and the pulpit efforts of Mr. Hicks were much appreciated. Through the courtesy of the First Church and All Souls', the presence of Mr. J. A. Laird and Miss Winnie Woods as soloists at the morning and evening services respectively was vouchsafed to us, and their renderings were very pleasing. Thanks are due to those gentlemen who acted as special collectors, as also to those friends whose kind response to our appeal resulted in the collections and donations just exceeding £60.

* *

**Sunday School Committee.**—In connection with the Essay Competition five essays were sent in. The first prize, value 10/-, is awarded to Miss Sara Robinson, "All Souls'" Sunday School, and second prizes, value 2/6 each, to Miss Maisie Martin, "All Souls'," and Miss Maud Steel, Rosemary Street Sunday Schools.

S. EVANS BOWEN, *Convener.*

List of Books recommended by Prof. C. W. Valentine, M.A., D.PHIL., for Sunday School Teachers:—Adams—"Primer of Teaching"—Clark—6d. Stanley Hall—"Youth" — Appleton — 5/-. Sully—"Studies in Childhood"—Longman's—10/6. Drummond — "Introduction to Child Study"—Arnold—6/-. Starbuck—"The Psychology of Religion"—Walter Scott.

## Echoes.

INTO this new changed world, war-worn and exhausted, weary but purified, the Christ shall come, bringing new Life, new Light to the darkened earth. "With healing in his wings" shall he come, to be welcomed by his own. Eyes, dull with weeping, shall be lifted to him, and their heaviness shall vanish. The sorrowful shall greet him, and their "sorrow shall be turned into joy." . . . . The Lord whom we await shall come to his earth, and the earth shall be glad of him and blossom under the touch of his feet.

ANNIE BESANT.

February, 1916.

### MARRIAGE.

M'MURRAY — MONTGOMERY. — In Rademon Meeting-house, on April 7th, by the Rev. J. J. Magill, B.A., John M'Murray, of Lisnamore, Crossgar, to Agnes Montgomery, of Drumaghlis.

### DEATHS.

BELL.—March 11th, very suddenly, at Ballyhalbert, Captain John Bell, aged 77 years.

MORELAND.—April 10th, at Ballyhalbert, Joseph Alexander Moreland, Stoker, Royal Navy; invalided home from active service.


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